Programs of Instruction

The Doctor of Law (JD) Degree

The regular curriculum in the Law School is a three-year (nine-quarter) program leading to the degree of Doctor of Law (JD). The program is open to candidates who have received a bachelor’s degree from an approved college before beginning their study in the Law School.

The entering class for the JD program is limited to approximately 195 students. All students begin the program during the Autumn Quarter in September. The calendar for the academic year is located on the last page of these Announcements.

Dual Degree Opportunities

The Law School participates with several other areas of the University in established dual degree programs. These programs have specific admission requirements and candidates are able to count course work in each area toward the academic requirements in the other area, thus reducing the time and expense involved in earning both degrees. The Law School has established dual degree programs with the Booth School of Business (both MBA and PhD degrees), the Harris School of Public Policy Studies (MPP), and the Divinity School (MDiv). In addition, Law School students have or are currently pursuing dual Masters’ degrees in other areas such as International Relations and Linguistics.

Students pursuing dual JD and Masters’ degrees may, with the approval of the Law School Dean of Students, count up to 12 credits of coursework outside the Law School toward the JD degree and towards the quarterly residency requirement. Per the American Bar Association, no coursework completed prior to matriculation at the Law School may be counted toward the JD degree. The admission and degree requirements for these programs are available from the Law School Admissions Office.

Dual degree students also must pay tuition at the Law School for eight quarters. In addition, they must be in residence as full-time students at the Law School for nine quarters, in each of which they must earn at least nine credits towards the JD degree in either LAWS-prefixed classes or classes that earn credit toward the JD degree. The tuition and residency requirement cannot be waived. For each quarter considered in
residence at the Law School, a student must be enrolled in at least one LAWS-prefixed class. This requirement cannot be waived. Once a student has met these dual degree residency requirements at the Law School, they may not be enrolled in additional quarters beyond the requirement. Students in dual degree programs cannot enroll in less than nine or more than 14 credits in any quarter in which they are counting credits toward the JD degree. This includes credits/units taken in the other department. There are no exceptions to this credit requirement.

Students may enroll in only one UChicago degree program at a time unless they (1) have approval in writing from the relevant UChicago programs and deans of students and (2) are enrolled in a joint or dual degree program.

**THE THREE-YEAR JD/MBA PROGRAM**

The three-year JD/MBA Program is an accelerated program where students complete both degrees in three years. Similar to other dual degree programs, students must be in residence as full-time students at the Law School for nine quarters, in each of which they must earn at least nine credits towards the JD degree in either LAWS-prefixed classes or classes that earn credit toward the JD degree. Students in this program may count up to 12 credits of coursework outside the Law School (non LAWS-prefixed classes) toward the JD degree and towards the quarterly residency requirement.

In the first year of the program, students are enrolled in Law School classes only and will complete their first-year Law School requirements during that year. In the second year, students enroll in a combination of Booth BUSN-prefixed class and LAWS-prefixed classes. In the second year, students are required to take the five LAWS-prefixed Doctoroff classes, designated as such in my.UChicago.edu. Students return to the Law School in the third year to complete their Law School requirements. Students cannot enroll in Booth classes in the third year. Students in this program must complete 35 core credit hours.

Students cannot enroll in less than nine or more than 14 credits in any quarter of residency through the duration of this program, and that includes quarters in which they are enrolled in both BUSN and LAWS prefixed classes (please see the conversion table in the last paragraph of the Non-Law Students section). There are no exceptions to this credit requirement.
JD/PhD Programs

Although there currently are no formal dual JD/PhD degree programs with other areas of the University (with the exception of the JD/PhD in Business), candidates who wish to concurrently pursue the JD in the Law School and a PhD in another area of the University have been able to facilitate and expedite a dual course of study.

Students who are enrolled in concurrent JD and PhD programs at the University of Chicago can count up to 25 credits earned outside the Law School towards their JD degrees. This credit is only awarded for: (1) graduate coursework undertaken in a PhD program at the University of Chicago; (2) only for coursework undertaken after a student has matriculated at the Law School; and (3) only for coursework approved by the Deputy Dean in consultation with the Dean of Students. Students permitted to count up to 25 credits toward their JD degrees also must pay tuition to the Law School for six quarters and be in residence at the Law School for six quarters. Students who have not advanced to candidacy in their PhD program by the time they receive their JD may apply no more than 12 credits earned outside the Law School towards their JD degrees, must pay tuition at the Law School for at least eight quarters, and must be in residence at the Law School for nine quarters. In the event a student’s PhD program does not have a formal “advanced to candidacy” status, the equivalent is that the student has finished all the required coursework and is primarily engaged in the writing of the dissertation. Students in JD/PhD programs who began their law studies at the Law School need to complete at least 80 credits of coursework at the Law School to obtain their J.Ds. These 80 credits may be earned during two years of intensive study at the Law School. Of these 80 credits, a minimum of 30 must be designated as meeting the Law School’s core credit requirement. All JD/PhD students who transferred to the Law School from another school must discuss their specific graduation requirements with the Dean of Students and the Deputy Dean upon matriculation. Students who wish to transfer 25 non-law credits towards their JD should consult with the Dean of Students, as it can impact the number of credits that may be earned through co-curricular activities and field placements.

JD/PhD students planning to apply for admission to a bar should research the current rules of the state bar to which they are hoping to be admitted to determine whether their jurisdiction has any additional curricular requirements. In addition, any student wishing to pursue a JD/PhD must keep in mind that American Bar Association rules require all JD degrees to be completed within 84 months of a student’s matriculation to law school.
The Law School is flexible in giving students leaves of absence so that they may register full-time in other areas of the University, so long as such a leave will not prevent the student from finishing the JD within the ABA’s 84-month time limit.

In addition, the Law School has joined several other professional schools on campus (Booth, SSA, and Public Policy) and offers law students an opportunity to earn a Certificate in Health Administration and Policy (GPHAP) while simultaneously obtaining a JD.

The GPHAP is a certificate program designed to train and prepare future leaders in health care, and it draws together students and faculty from various fields for the purpose of providing students with deep interdisciplinary training in policy, management, finance, and social service delivery. Health lawyers play an important role in many aspects of the health care field, including: health law practices in firms, serving as in-house lawyers in health care organizations, addressing issues related to health care reform in all settings, pharmaceutical policy and administration, medical device policy and administration, medical innovation, public health, health care regulation and accreditation, and much more. GPHAP also has a global health track for students interested in international law and health.

Students admitted to the program must take four classes (two required and two elective), complete a supervised practicum, and attend three health-related workshops, seminars, lectures, or GPHAP special events offered on campus each quarter. Students must provide a short synopsis of each event attended. Regarding the practicum, this may be fulfilled by a law student’s summer internship if related to health care. In addition, GPHAP offers paid health related internships that count toward the practicum requirement. There is no extra charge to participate in GPHAP. Students in the program may transfer no more than 12 non-law credits towards the JD degree, including the GPHAP required classes.

Any law student interested in the program is encouraged to apply before the beginning of their second year of law school. A special fellowship, the Ray E. Brown Fellowship, is awarded to one Law student each year and provides the recipient a $500 award. For additional information on the GPHAP program and the Ray E. Brown Fellowship, please see https://gphap.uchicago.edu/.
THE GRADUATE PROGRAM

The Law School offers five graduate degrees:

1. Master of Laws (LLM),
2. Master of Comparative Law (M.Comp.L.),
3. Master of Legal Studies (MLS),
4. Doctor of Jurisprudence (JSD),
5. Doctor of Comparative Law (D.Comp.L.).

MASTER OF LAWS (LLM) / MASTER OF COMPARATIVE LAW (M.COMP.L.)

Both programs are limited to students who have met at least one of the following requirements:

1. obtained a JD degree from an ABA approved law school in the United States,
2. completed the academic legal education in a foreign country required to take the bar examination in that country,
3. be qualified to practice law (admitted to the bar) in a foreign country, or
4. completed the basic four-year undergraduate law study in a Japanese or South Korean university.

Both programs require full-time attendance at the Law School for one academic year (three consecutive academic quarters). Students may begin these programs only in the Autumn Quarter.

Unlike a number of other law schools, the University of Chicago does not offer a specialized LLM degree with a large number of graduate courses in a particular field such as taxation or securities regulation. The LLM degree is awarded to students who have successfully completed 27 course hours (generally nine courses) over three quarters while maintaining a grade point average of 170. The law school typically offers four LLM-only courses: Writing & Research in the US Legal System, Constitutional Law for LLMs, Contracts for LLMs, and Civil Procedure for LLMs. Outside of these specific courses, LLM students will have all of their classes with students in the JD program. The M.Comp.L. degree may be awarded at the student's discretion if the same requirements are fulfilled.

Each year the Law School receives approximately 1000 applications for about 80 positions in the LLM program. In recent years, all of the students admitted to the LLM program have been graduates of foreign law schools. This is a reflection not of a bias in favor of foreign law school graduates but rather a judgment by the Graduate Studies
Committee that the Law School's small size and lack of graduate programs specializing in specific substantive areas make it unsuitable for most American law school graduates thinking of a second degree. Exceptions may be made for American law graduates whose research interests strongly correlate with those of a member of the faculty, and for whom graduate studies at this law school seem to be particularly appropriate.

Admission decisions for the LLM program are based primarily on two factors: 1) the ability of the applicant to flourish in a demanding academic program as evidenced by the prior academic and professional record; and 2) the extent to which the applicant's background and research interests coincide with available academic resources for the academic year for which they will be in residence. It is, therefore, particularly important for the application to be accompanied by a detailed statement of the candidate's academic interests and career plans.

The University requires that all applicants must take the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) or the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) within two years of the date of their application. We also accept the TOEFL ITP Special At Home Edition. A minimum total score of 104 overall of the TOEFL is required. Minimum required scores on the IELTS are an overall score of 7.5 and sub scores of 7 each. Most admitted LLM applicants will have substantially higher scores.

Candidates will have the opportunity to indicate they do not intend to submit a TOEFL or IELTS if their native language is not English, but English has been a primary language of communication and schooling for them since childhood; or they were enrolled for at least one academic year in full-time status in a course of study at an accredited English-medium post-secondary institution in one of the following countries or territories within the past ten years: Antigua and Barbuda, Australia, Bahamas, Barbados, Canada, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Hong Kong, Ireland, Jamaica, New Zealand, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Singapore, South Africa, Trinidad and Tobago, the United Kingdom, the United States.

**MASTER OF LEGAL STUDIES (MLS)**

This degree program is designed for PhD students and established scholars who wish to improve their knowledge of law without completing a full three-year degree. The goal of the MLS program is to help researchers better understand legal issues and to improve their research through interdisciplinary training. Graduates of the program may become academics in their PhD discipline or in law. Admissions decisions are based in part on as assessment of the benefit of legal training to the applicant’s research.
For PhD students, our preference is for students who have completed their coursework and are either proposing or working on their dissertation.

**DOCTOR OF JURISPRUDENCE (JSD) / DOCTOR OF COMPARATIVE LAW (D.COMP.L.)**

Both programs are limited to students who have earned either a JD degree, an LLM degree from an ABA approved law school in the United States, or a law degree (undergraduate and/or graduate) from another common law or commonwealth nation where that individual has an outstanding academic record and sufficient prior work that they are prepared to embark on a dissertation project.

Both programs require full-time attendance at the Law School for two academic years (six academic quarters) and the completion of a dissertation that is accepted by the Graduate Studies Committee. Candidates must complete their dissertations within five years of beginning the program.

In a typical year, about 40 candidates apply to the JSD program for two or three positions. In order to qualify for admission to this program, students must ordinarily have maintained at least a 178 average during their LLM year at the University of Chicago or a comparable performance at the prior law school attended. Applicants must propose one or more Chicago faculty members to supervise a dissertation and must submit a dissertation proposal that in the opinion of the Graduate Studies Committee promises to result in a creditable contribution to legal scholarship. Candidates for admission must not contact Law School faculty members prior to their admission to the program.

**PROFESSIONAL JOURNALS, SPECIAL PROGRAMS, AND CENTERS**

**PROFESSIONAL JOURNALS**

The Law School publishes seven professional journals. *The University of Chicago Law Review, The University of Chicago Legal Forum, The Chicago Journal of International Law*, and *The University of Chicago Business Law Review* are student edited. For more information on these journals, see the section on Student Activities and Organizations, below.

*The Supreme Court Review* is an annual volume devoted to professional and interdisciplinary criticism and analysis of the work of the United States Supreme Court.
The Journal of Law and Economics publishes research on a broad range of topics, including the economic analysis of regulation and the behavior of regulated firms, the political economy of legislation and the legislative processes, law and finance, corporate finance and governance, and industrial organization. The Journal of Legal Studies is a journal of interdisciplinary academic research into law and legal institutions. It emphasizes social science approaches, especially those of economics, political science, and psychology, but it also publishes the work of historians, philosophers, and others who are interested in legal theory.

**Special Programs and Centers**

Established in 2019, the **Center on Law and Finance** advances the understanding of how law interacts with—and shapes—financial systems and concretely connects that knowledge with the real world. Continuing the Law School’s commitment to the practical application of legal theory, the Center facilitates a meaningful dialogue between academics and practitioners. To achieve these goals, the Center hosts a yearly schedule of conferences, roundtables, speaker events, and seminars where leading minds of law and finance share their work and discuss forefront issues in the areas of financial transactions, financial markets, securities, private equity, venture capital, bankruptcy, and debt. These events are built around educational programs to expose practitioners, judges, and lawmakers to the insights produced by the University’s cutting-edge research; transactional programs to develop and foster increasing research and student education on the legal structure of financial deals; and international programs that highlight and explore the global nature of law and finance. Professor Anthony Casey leads the Center.

The **Center for Law, Philosophy, and Human Values**, established in 2008, sponsors speakers and conferences to support and encourage the reflective, critical, and philosophical study of human values, with a particular emphasis on the conceptual, historical, and empirical foundations of the normative systems—moral, political, and legal—in which human beings live. The Center’s mission encompasses not only the traditional concerns of moral, political, and legal theory—in Anglophone, European and non-Western traditions—but also the history of thought about ethical, political, and legal questions as these bear on contemporary questions. Traditional problems of conceptual analysis and normative justification are supplemented by attention to empirical results in the human sciences as they relate to the nature and viability of various forms of normative ordering. Professor Brian Leiter directs the Center.
The **Coase-Sandor Institute for Law and Economics** continues the long tradition of excellence at the University of Chicago Law School as the birthplace of law and economics. First established as the Institute for Law and Economics in 2011, the goal of the Institute is to promote the understanding and dissemination of the economic approach to law. Toward that end, Institute faculty produce cutting-edge research on the intersection of law and economics in the fields of contract law, corporate governance, finance, taxation, environmental regulation, energy policy, and criminal justice, among others. The Institute team provides empirical research support, promotes learning by students, faculty, and fellows, and organizes conferences and events in Chicago and beyond. Professor Omri Ben-Shahar, renowned contract law scholar, is the faculty director of the Coase-Sandor Institute.

In February 2013, Richard Sandor and his wife, Ellen, became the principal donors to a $10 million endowment in law and economics at the University of Chicago Law School. The Sandors made the gift in honor of Dr. Sandor’s mentor, Nobel Laureate Ronald Coase, the Clifton R. Musser Professor Emeritus of Economics at the Law School. In recognition, the Institute was renamed the Coase-Sandor Institute for Law and Economics.

Created in 2020, the **Constitutional Law Institute** supports research and scholarship on longstanding constitutional issues as an integral part of the Law School’s scholarly and research mission. The Institute also shares the Law School’s commitment to free speech and intellectual inquiry that is independent of partisan fashions. The Institute will promote rigorous analysis of constitutional issues and then share those ideas more broadly with the general public. Since the Institute’s launch, it has hosted numerous events and activities, as well as produced two multi-season podcasts: *Dissenting Opinions* and *Divided Argument*. The Institute hosts a yearly schedule of roundtables, conferences, podcast events, and visitors in the coming years. Professor William Baude leads the Institute.

The **Doctoroff Business Leadership Program** is a certificate-granting program that blends the best of the MBA curriculum into our prestigious, three-year Law School education and is designed to arm students with the skills and knowledge they will need to thrive as corporate attorneys, in-house counsels, business leaders, and entrepreneurs. The Program focuses on preparing law students to advise, lead, and create business enterprises large and small through rigorous training in entity formation, business combinations, capital structure and finance, business strategy, negotiation, and marketing.
A select group of business-oriented students who apply to the Program during the Law School application process are chosen to become part of the Doctoroff Business Leadership Program. As part of the Program, students are matched with an alumni business mentor, participate in a business internships and leadership enrichment activities, and are required to complete a core business curriculum taught at the Law School by leading from UChicago’s world-renowned Booth School of Business.

The **Malyi Center for the Study of Institutional and Legal Integrity** is the Law School’s newest center, established in 2023. The Malyi Center will stimulate new research on the sources of sound institutions, their consequences, and the conditions of their endurance. The Malyi Center will focus on expanding academic research in international and comparative law by Law School faculty; encourage real-world impact via activities such as conferences, events, speakers’ series, and other collaborations with practitioners; and support additional scholarship in international and comparative law from the academic community outside the University. Professor Tom Ginsburg, a leading expert on international and comparative law, is the new center’s faculty director.

The Law School’s **Program in Legal History** encourages research and study in this field. In addition to courses devoted to the subject, the Law School sponsors the Maurice and Muriel Fulton Lecture, which invites a prominent legal historian to speak each year. Periodic workshops, under the auspices of the Public Law & Legal Theory Workshop and the Constitutional Law Workshop, bring together faculty and students to discuss a scholarly paper on a topic of legal history. The Program is directed by Professors Alison LaCroix and Farah Peterson.